



# MEMORANDUM

DATE: July 16, 2013

TO: Chair Tebelius and Members of the Planning Commission

FROM: Paul Inghram, AICP, Comprehensive Planning Manager, 425-452-4070  
[pinghram@bellevuewa.gov](mailto:pinghram@bellevuewa.gov)  
Mike Kattermann, AICP, Senior Planner, 452-2042  
[mkattermann@bellevuewa.gov](mailto:mkattermann@bellevuewa.gov)  
*Planning and Community Development*

SUBJECT: Light Rail Station Names

At the June 12, 2013 Planning Commission meeting staff presented information about the Sound Transit final design program for the East Link light rail extension project. One important, but often overlooked, aspect of final design is the permanent naming of the light rail stations. Sound Transit solicited ideas from the public at a recent series of open houses and through an online comment form. At this study session, Bellevue staff will ask the Planning Commission for its input on station names.

## BACKGROUND

During the planning phase, Sound Transit assigned temporary names to identify station locations (i.e. South Bellevue Park-&-Ride, East Main, Bellevue Transit Center, Hospital, 120<sup>th</sup>, 130<sup>th</sup>). The Sound Transit Board will make the decision on permanent station names, possibly later this year, and the city would like to encourage greater input on the decision as these will be in place for many decades to come. PCD staff seeks input from the Planning Commission and others to compile a list for City Council consideration and a possible recommendation to the Sound Transit Board.

To avoid rider confusion and to make using transit easy, Sound Transit seeks names that are distinctive and help the rider navigate the local geography. Common among transit systems, station names often use cross streets and neighborhood names. In Chicago, stations in the Chicago Loop have names such as "Clark/Lake" and "Madison/Wabash" referencing the closest street intersections. In London, where the streets don't follow a logical grid, station names often reflect local landmarks and place names such as "Piccadilly Circus" or "Charing Cross." The BART system in the Bay area commonly uses place names, such as "Downtown Berkeley," but also uses cross streets for some stations, such as "16<sup>th</sup> St/Mission."

The naming criteria used by the Sound Transit Board is for names to:

- Reflect the nature of the environment: neighborhoods, street names, landmarks, plus geographical locations
- Be brief and easy to read and remember

- Comply with federal Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) guidelines and requirements and be limited to 30 characters
- Avoid commercial references because they may change, prove confusing to the public and be costly to change
- Avoid similar names or words in existing facility names

## **Possible Station Names**

Response totals are based on public feedback to Sound Transit's online survey and at the 30% design open houses.

### South Bellevue

**South Bellevue** (43%), **Enatai** (34%), **Mercer Slough Natural Park** (15%)

Others submitted through Sound Transit's process included **Bellevue Gateway**, **Blueberry Farm** and **Mercer Slough**.

Other local names include: **Winters House**.

### East Main

**Surrey Downs** (43%), **East Main** (33%), **112<sup>th</sup> Avenue SE & Main** (21%)

Others submitted through Sound Transit's process included **112<sup>th</sup> Avenue SE** and **Main Street**.

### Bellevue Transit Center

**Downtown Bellevue** and **Bellevue Transit Center** (tie), **Bellevue Civic Center** (distant 3<sup>rd</sup>).

Other local names include: **NE 6<sup>th</sup> Street**, **Bellevue Pedestrian Corridor**.

### Hospital

**Lake Bellevue** (48%), **Midlakes** (28%), other (24%)

Other local names include: **NE 8<sup>th</sup> Street**, **Sturtevant Creek** (which flows immediately adjacent to the station), **Wilburton**, **Hospital**.

The Hospital station is the site of the original Vegetable Growers Association warehouse, now the Arthur Murray Dance building, that was used to ship local farm produce prior to WWII and may have had a role in the Internment of Japanese Americans. The area has commonly been referred to as Midlakes. For example, the new Bartell Drug store at NE 8<sup>th</sup> Street and 120<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE is named the Midlakes Bartell's.

### 120<sup>th</sup>

**Kelsey Creek** (twice the vote of 120<sup>th</sup> Avenue), **120<sup>th</sup> Avenue**, **Spring District**,

Others submitted through ST's process included **Bel-Red**, **Japanese vegetable farm**, **Spring Station**, **120th/Spring District**, **Clancy** and **Overlake**.

The 120<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE station is located on one of the larger pre-WWII farm sites. More research could be conducted to better understand the historical farm and place names used for the area.

130<sup>th</sup>: **130<sup>th</sup>** (26%), **Goff Creek** (23%), Others included **Goff Creek/130th**, **Creek District**, **130th Avenue**, **Bridle Trails**, **Dempsey** and **Wilburton**.

## **NEXT STEPS**

PCD staff will compile input from the Planning Commission and others for City Council consideration and a possible recommendation to the Sound Transit Board.

### **Attachments:**

1. East Link alignment and station map

